

### The Passing Show

## Latest Hitchcock Thriller Lacks Only Credibility

By Jay Carmody

Washingtonians will not exactly pre-them on what Alfred Hitchcock says goes on here in "Strangers On A Train," which opened yesterday at the Warner.

Come to think of it, neither will Hitchcock. The old master of the macabre, as tricky a man as ever pointed a movie camera, is in something of the position of a great chef who made a beautiful icing but forgot to bake the cake. Unlike most film directors who suffer from a lack of invention, Hitchcock is the victim of his excessive talent in this direction.

In "Strangers On A Train" he is so resourceful that he ends up what seems like four or five pictures away from the one he set out to make. This is not in itself an uninteresting spectacle but more single-minded movie patrons are likely to find themselves exasperated and unconvinced. These are not the moods of happy people, nor do they represent the guarantee once implicit in the name of Hitchcock.

As in "Rope," his predecessor film, Hitchcock again is fascinated by the murderous psychopath. This one is a demented playboy type, played by Robert Walker, whose obsession is not merely committing the perfect murder but also of selecting a victim who is being a nuisance.

It is with this thought on his mind that he strikes up a lounge conversation with Farley Granger on a trip between here and New York (oddly enough on the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad). He knows who Granger is, a top-flight tennis player, and he also knows that the young man is in love with a Senator's daughter whom he cannot marry because of a current marital entanglement.

"The trouble with murder," Walker says in effect to his traveling companion, "is that the motive gives a man away. Why not, therefore, old man, let me kill you soiled dove of a wife while you are in my old man? Neither you nor she knows the victim, which will throw the police completely off the trail. In other words, let's trade murders."

Granger, no credit to the intelligence of top-flight tennis stars, is not taken in by this, but

"STRANGERS ON A TRAIN," a Warner Brothers picture, produced by Alfred Hitchcock, directed by Hitchcock, screenplay by Raymond Chandler and Cresset Gray, adaptation by Whitfield Cook from the novel by Patricia Highsmith. At the Ambassador and Warner.

He feels himself an accessory when Walker completes his half of the bargain by murdering the unwanted wife in a sordid amusement park stranglehold.

It is Hitchcock's custom, of course, to come up with a dramatic ending that is dizzy beyond the wildest imagining of his followers. In this case, it is a merry-go-round that goes mad when the dying operator pulls the wrong lever and gives the device full power. While it is thus madly whirling to what appears to be everybody's destruction, the Senator's character and his victim fight it out to possession of an all-important piece of evidence.

Not even at that moment when the tennis player is rushing to Union Station by driving west across Memorial Bridge. Whoever took that shot out of the library for Hitchcock should have read the label more carefully.

That suspense for which he became famous is not as cleverly manipulated in "Strangers On A Train" as it usually is. It centers here, of course, in whether the young tennis player will carry out his part of the bargain, be trapped as an accessory to Walker's murder, or ultimately be bright enough to say the one word or two that will clear him. In view of the unlikelyhood that Granger can go



SHIPBOARD SENSATION—Is Vicki Cummings in "Clutterbuck," the Benn Levy romantic jangle at the Olney. Arthur Treacher is the male lead in the project, which will tour widely on the summer circuit.

on being as dumb as he acts, the end of the film is a foregone conclusion.

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### Where and When

Current Screen Attractions and Time of Showing

Arena—"The Scarecrow"; 8:30 p.m.  
Carter Barron Amphitheater, Rock Creek Park—"Faith of Our Fathers"; 8:40 p.m.

Ambassador—"Strangers on a Train"; 1:15, 3:20, 5:25, 7:30 and 9:40 p.m.

Capitol—"Excuse My Dust"; 11:00 a.m., 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, and 10:00 p.m. Stage shows: 1:00, 3:45, 6:30 and 9:15 p.m.

Columbia—"On the Rivers"; 11:25 a.m., 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:45 p.m.

Dupont—"The Brave Bulls"; 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:30 and 9:40 p.m.

Keith's—"Francis Goes to the Races"; 11:45 a.m., 1:45, 3:45, 5:45, 7:45 and 9:45 p.m.

Little—"Molly"; 1:15, 3:00, 4:40, 6:25, 8:05 and 9:50 p.m.

Metropolitan—"Little Big Horn"; 12:45, 3:45, 6:40 and 9:40 p.m.

National—"The Invaders"; 11:00 a.m., 2:10, 5:20 and 8:35 p.m.

Palace—"Take Care of My Little Girl"; 11:20 a.m., 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40 and 9:45 p.m.

Pix—"Bitter Rice"; 2:10, 4:05, 5:55, 7:50 and 9:45 p.m.

Playhouse—"Tales of Hoffmann"; 2:30 and 8:30 p.m.

Plaza—"The Dancing Years"; 11:45 a.m., 2:20, 5:00, 7:40 and 10:20 p.m.

Trans-Lux—"Circle of Danger"; 11:00 a.m., 12:40, 2:25, 4:10, 5:55, 7:40 and 11:00 p.m. Sneak preview: 9:00 p.m.

Warner—"Strangers on a Train"; 11:15 a.m., 1:20, 3:30, 5:35, 7:35 and 9:45 p.m.

## 'Excuse My Dust' Recalls How Nice It Was in 1900

Loew's Capitol, a wise old host of a movie house, poured its guests a large slug of Americana yesterday with the opening of Red Skelton's latest, "Excuse My Dust."

With Skelton, Technicolor and appropriate music, the film is a nostalgic recall of how it was in this tranquil country back in the early 20th century. The machine age was in the air then, especially the gasmobile which is now so M-G-M film is more of an innocent than an exciting reminder of what life was like.

It may well have been the assumption of Director Roy Rowland that it would be absurd to make an exciting movie of how quiet life used to be. In "Excuse My Dust," he chooses to sneak up on the customers with the insinuation that it was better to be dull like grandpa than neurotic as we are now.

"Excuse My Dust" is otherwise a musical comedy rather obviously designed to fit Skelton and his bubble. It plays its complete faith on Skelton's plucky artistry and his mimicry of a small town boy who becomes a laughing stock by trying to invent a horseless carriage. This has been done a number of times before. It also has been done better, but seldom better natured.

While the past is being thus taken care of on the screen, the sophisticated present is being expertly handled on the stage by this week's headline dancers, Mario and Flora. Young as they are, this team is the favorite with Washington audiences. This is as it should be.

Indiana, which sometimes must get the feeling it is the most typical of the States, is the background of the story George Wells wrote for Skelton and his well chosen associates in "Excuse My Dust." Here, in a typical small town, Skelton goes about whipping up a pioneer automobile while the neighbors amiably scoff at his madness.

Chief scoffers, naturally, is the lively stable owner (William Demarest) whose daughter (Sally Forrest) is Skelton's fiancée. Most of the town is behind Demarest and his horses, but the feud is an affair with charm. As all small towns do in musical comedies, this one seems constantly to be having moonlight hayrides, daylight picnics and box socials.

These provide the occasion for a considerable variety of seasonal songs and dances, one of the latter of which is quite a pleasing ballet dealing with a forecast of women's styles for the first 50 years of the 20th century. In this Miss Forrest proves that she is quite a lovely and talented girl dancing down the decades from petticoats to practically nothing.

The climax of the film's action is a 20-mile road race in which Metro pulls the miracle of putting a flock of ancient automobiles in running condition. These include gas, electric and steam-driven crudities which stage a fairly interesting competition despite the fact that it must be the longest, slowest race ever photographed.

The stage show headed by Mario and Flora also features an appropriate seasonal overture, a great

"EXCUSE MY DUST," a Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer picture, produced by Jack Cummings, directed by Roy Rowland, written by George Wells, at the Capitol.

The Cast:

Red Skelton, Sally Forrest, Cyrus Randolph, Jr., Macdonald Carey, Harvey Bullock, William Demarest, Daisy Lou Shubert, Monica Lewis, Mayor Fred Haskett, Raymond Walburn, Mrs. Belden, Lillian Bronson, Ben Parrott, Guy Anderson, Cyrus Randolph, Sr., Marjorie Wood, Horace Carter, Lee Scott, Mr. Auditor, Alex Gerry, Nick Tosca, Jim Hayward, Race Judge, Will Wright.

big production featuring the orchestra, soloists and an octette. The theme is "Show Boat" and it fits July 4 as well as any roman candle ever made.

Other acts on the bill include Steve Evans and his impressions of well known Hollywoodites, the singing team of Betty Jane Watson and Jerry Austin and the novelty skating number by the Macks.

J. C.

AMUSEMENTS.

Pix 13TH AT H ST. N.W. DOORS OPEN AT 1:30

"Mangano is xavier than both Mae West and June Russell. Witness the spell-binding 'BITTER RICE' and see what we mean."

WALTER WINCHELL, M. Y. Mirror

"Bitter Rice"

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Ivor Novello's Great Operetta

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"Gala Portfolios" Music by Jacques Offenbach with MASSINE • FRANKLIN MADDAVA • TOUMANOFF DANCERS

KATHERINE DUNHAM and her Company and "CARNIVAL OF RHYTHM" AIR-CONDITIONED

Roth's PLAZA N. Y. Ave. at H St. AT 11:15

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Roth's LITTLE 9TH ST. AT F St. ME 1226

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MOONLIGHTS MARSHALL HALL MOUNT VERNON

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CAPITOL NOW Open 10:45

EXCUSE MY DUST

Red SKELTON, Sally Forrest, Macdonald CAREY

Stage MARIO & FLORA

BETTY JANE WATSON & JERRY AUSTIN

Palace NOW Open 10:45

Take Care of My Little Girl

Technicolor

CRAIN-ROBERTSON GYMNAST

COLUMBIA NOW Open 10:45

COOL AIR DANNY KAYE On the Riviera

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TODAY'S NEIGHBORHOOD MOVIES

DRIVE-IN Open 8 P.M. JEFF KEYES in "SMUGGLER'S ISLAND" (Technicolor) at 9:20, 11.

HYATTVILLE JOAN CRAWFORD, ROBERT YOUNG, FRANK LOVEJOY in "GOODBYE MY FANCY" at 7:30, 9:20, 11:15, 3:20, 5:25, 7:30, 9:40.

CHEVERLY PAGE, "THE BULLFIGHTER AND THE LADY" at 6:15, 8:15, 10:15.

MARLBORO GLENN FORD, ANN KEEPER in "GO FOR BROKE" at 7:15, 9:15, 11:15.

KEYWOOD RANDOLPH SCOTT, JANE CARTER in "SANTA FE" (Technicolor) at 6:20, 8:20, 10:20.

CAMEO Open 5:45 P.M. YVONNE DECARLO, JACKIE O'LEARY, HAWK, and "ABBY AND COE" in "THE FOREIGN LEGION" Last Complete Show 8:35.

ALLEN JOAN CRAWFORD, ROBERT YOUNG, FRANK LOVEJOY in "GO FOR BROKE" at 7:20, 9:20.

Sat. Special Children's Matinee. "BAD BOY" at 1:30, 4:30, only. Plus 3 cartoons, Bugs Bunny, Tom and Jerry, Mickey Mouse. Stage Jambores at 2:45.

BETHESDA ROBERT STACKE, BULLFIGHTER AND THE LADY at 6:15, 8:15, 10:15.

VIERS MILL JOAN CRAWFORD, "GOODBYE MY FANCY" at 7:30, 9:20, 11:15.

MILO VAN JOHNSON in "GO FOR BROKE" at 7:20, 9:20.

STATE "THE GREAT MISSOURI REY. ELLEN DREW.

LEE "BRANDIED" ALAN LADD. MONA FISHBEIN in "DODGE CITY" at 10:30.

ARLINGTON "FOLLOW THE FORD. ANNE BAXTER.

WILSON DANGER. ALAN LADD. PHYLLIS CALVERT.

ASHTON "WOMAN ON THE RUN" at 7:30, 9:20, 11:15.

GLEBE "GOODBYE MY FANCY" at 7:30, 9:20, 11:15.

BUCKINGHAM "FOLLOW THE FORD. ANNE BAXTER.

BYRD "GAMBLING HOUSE" VICTOR MATURE, TERRY MOORE.

JEFFERSON "GO FOR BROKE" VAN JOHNSON WARNER ANDERSON.

THE VILLAGE 1307 R. I. Ave. N.E. ME. 9227

ANN DVORAK in "I WAS AN AMERICAN SPY" at 6:00, 7:55, 9:50.

NEWTON 12th & Newton Sts. N.E. LA. 6-114

JEFF CHANDLER in "SMUGGLER'S ISLAND" (Technicolor) at 6:00, 7:55, 9:50.

JESSE 18th and Irving Sts. N.E. DU. 9861

SUSAN HAYWARD in "I CAN GET IT IF I WANT IT" at 6:00, 7:55, 9:50.

FLORENCE MARLYN in "TOKYO FILE 212" at 7:45.

VERNON 3707 Mt. Vernon Ave. Alex. Va. Alex. 2424

TYRONE POWER in "RAWHIDE" at 6:00, 7:45, 9:25.

APEX 4813 Mass. Ave. N.W. WQ. 4600

Cont. 1-11. Gala Disney Festival. Last Washington Showing. "CINDERELLA" in Technicolor. 1:00, 3:55, 6:50, 9:45. "TOMMY TIME" in Technicolor. 2:40, 5:40, 8:35.

ATLAS 1331 H St. N.E. AT. 8300

Most Talked About Picture. "THE THING" with MARGARET SHERIDAN. "SMUGGLER'S ISLAND" in Technicolor. 1:00, 3:55, 6:50, 9:45. "TOMMY TIME" in Technicolor. 2:40, 5:40, 8:35.

FLOWER Piney Branch Rd. and Flower Ave. JU. 7-0717

Doors Open 12:30. All-Disco Festival. Last Washington Showing. "SO BEAR TO MY DREAMS" at 6:00, 7:55, 9:50. "BAMBI" at 1:30, 5:00, 8:20. Plus Four Disney Cartoons.

NAYLOR VI 4000

Doors Open 6 P.M. ALL-STAR SHOW. DANNY KAYE. "UP IN ARMS" at 8:05, 9:50. "HOPE" with GOT ME COV-ERED" at 6:15, 8:15, 10:15.

MACARTHUR 4859 MacArthur Blvd. OR. 4600

Doors Open 6 P.M. JOAN CRAWFORD, ROBERT YOUNG, FRANK LOVEJOY in "GO FOR BROKE" at 7:20, 9:20.

BEN JOHNSON, TERRY MOORE, "MIGHTY JOE" at 8:10.

GREENBELT Greenbelt Rd. and Greenbelt Rd. ME. 2222

Doors Open 12:30. All-Disco Festival. Last Washington Showing. "SO BEAR TO MY DREAMS" at 6:00, 7:55, 9:50. "BAMBI" at 1:30, 5:00, 8:20. Plus Four Disney Cartoons.

CIRCLE 2106 Pa. Ave. N.W. RE. 0184

Last Day. JOAN CRAWFORD, ROBERT YOUNG, FRANK LOVEJOY in "GO FOR BROKE" at 7:20, 9:20.

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